

I support media diversity

The foundation of true liberty in these United States has always been, I believe, the basic freedom of the Press, as a freedom demanded in our Bill of Rights. How else does a person inform him/herself about various sides of an issue, and become familiar with wide divergence of thoughts about a given issue when the sources are large companies reflecting only one point of view? I am writing to you today to consider that taking away limitations on consolidation of ownership of the media will only succeed in limiting the view expressed in the publications and Radio and TV commentary to those of the nationwide ownership of these franchises. I'm not interested only in what Knight/Ridder or the BBC has to say about a given issue. I desire access to several different points of view on any given topic.

Competition between the different media creates a climate where truth-seeking is encouraged, and both sides of any issue are easily found, which enable an informed voter population to make good decisions in supporting policies in government, or opposing some.

Please make note of my desire to keep a wide and varied press, whose ownerships are not beholden to any one huge conglomerate that sets the tone of media reporting. I wish to register my alarm about this issue and to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

Further, I am expressing my opposition to the FCC being heavily influenced by the very groups it is supposed to control. This makes a mockery of any group of overseers in the government who are supposed to speak for the people.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,

Ellen Meehan

